

Managing human-digital relationships in the hospitality education sector

 By [Vera Schneider](#)

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The hospitality industry has seen many developments over the past decades. [Trends disrupting and evolving](#) industry dynamics create opportunities for new players on the market, new business models, and new kinds of travel experiences. One of the key enablers of these changes is the adoption and advancement of various technologies. Multiple site visits have highlighted differing approaches to the use of technology in hotels.



While there are variations in the extent to which technology is integrated, hotel companies seem to share an interest in finding the balance between technological and human resources when fulfilling customer needs.

In parallel to the developments in the field, technology is also considered a [“key change agent”](#) in educating hospitality professionals. Online and blended learning options are becoming increasingly available alongside more traditional in-classroom formats. This, in turn, raises the possibility for parts of the learning experience to continue to be delivered directly by the professor, and for other parts to be automated or managed by technology.

Hospitality is a dynamic and attractive industry which presents students with multiple career prospects. To enable readiness to thrive in the workplace, students are likely to gain most where opportunities exist for a multiplicity of learnings, resources and tools. This may be through immersive industry experiences, real-life challenges and other experiential formats. New technologies can allow such learnings to be successfully delivered in person as well as digitally. Shifting toward digital formats requires learners to be open and ready to engage with different and potentially new ways of learning.



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Professors, likewise, need to embrace these new possibilities and be prepared for the challenges that may be faced. What

may have been successfully delivered face-to-face in the classroom, may not seamlessly transfer into an online space. Professors more comfortable face-to-face in the classroom may need additional training to excel behind the camera lens. Professors who are used to direct exchange with students may need to consider how to best engage them when the content is pre-recorded.

It is an exciting moment to embrace technological advances in hospitality – in the field and in education. The pace of change is rapid. Information relevant today may become obsolete in the future.



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This presents opportunities and challenges for all stakeholders involved – hospitality firms, learners, and professors. Hospitality graduates will likely pursue continued learning opportunities after completing their foundational training. Their future studies may be enabled and optimized by more customized and flexible educational formats.

Shifts and trends in the industry will require new programs and offers, leveraging various degrees of online, blended and face-to-face combinations. Professors and educational institutions will need to keep pace and find a successful formula that enhances student learning, knowledge delivery and personal development. These learning experiences will need to enable students to meet the challenges of the workplace as we know it, but also the future workplace that is continuously created.

ABOUT VERA SCHNEIDER

Vera Schneider is responsible for managing graduate programme operations and works closely with management to shape the portfolio and improve curriculum, programme design, and delivery. She is passionate about helping others develop their leadership potential and supports students' soft skills development. Prior to joining EHL, Vera worked at the World Economic Forum with the Global Shapers Community - an initiative focused on leaders under 30 creating social impact in their local communities.

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